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Examiner: LUBY Matthew D
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REMARKS

Claims 1-18 and 20-30 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 2, 20-23, 28 and 29 have been amended and claim 19 has been canceled. Reconsideration of the claims in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 15, 16, 26, and 27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Uchida in view of Minami. Claims 11, 12, 14, 17-23, 28-30 stand objected to but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants disagree with Examiner's contention that the claims identified above are obvious in view of the cited prior art. Nonetheless in view of the already lengthy and expensive prosecution of this application (including an appeal), and in view of the fact that objected to 19 defines protectable subject matter which is commercially reasonable to the Applicants, claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 19. Applicants believe that amended claim 1 is now allowable. Claim 1 has also been amended to improve the structure of the claim by introducing the limitations directly with the elements rather than later in the claim. This was not in response to the Examiner's rejection and no surrender of subject matter is intended. No matter other than that originally found in claim 19 was introduced into claim 1 as a result of these amendments.

Dependent claims 2, 20-23, 28 and 29 have been amended such that their dependencies are consistent with amended claim 1 and canceled claim 19. Again, this was not in response to the Examiner's rejection and no surrender of subject matter is intended.

In view of the above amendments to independent claim 1 and dependent claims 2, 20-23, 28 and 29, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection to claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 15, 16, 26, and 27 is respectfully requested.

The Applicant appreciates the indication that claims 11, 12, 14, 17-23, 28-30 are allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, however, in view of the amendment to claim 1, the Applicants irrespectively submits that all of the currently pending claims are

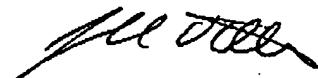
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allowable and that the entire application is in condition for allowance. The Applicants will file a continuation application having claims directed to these objected claims in due time.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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